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THE GULL
MONTHLY BULLETIN

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY INC.

Volume 49 Berkeley, Calif. February 1967 Number 2

DR. SWAN TO DESCRIBE WORLD TOUR

Dr. Lawrence Swan of the San Francisco State College Biology Department will give an illustrated talk entitled "Around the World in Seventy Days" at the Golden Gate Audubon meeting **Thursday, February 9 at 7:30 p.m.** in San Francisco. The meeting will be held in the Hall of Flowers, which is just inside Golden Gate Park on Ninth Avenue near Lincoln. The parking area is well lighted. Visitors are welcome. — MRS. PHYLLIS ZWEIGART, *Program Chairman.*

FEBRUARY FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, February 4, to Palo Alto Salt Marsh. Meet at **9 a.m.** at the duck pond where the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society has a big bulletin board (across from the Palo Alto Yacht Harbor). To reach this meeting place from Bayshore Freeway 101, take the Embarcadero Ave. Exit at Palo Alto. This Exit divides soon after leaving the freeway. Take the road marked "Embarcadero **East**" and follow it to the Palo Alto Yacht Harbor.

We plan to walk along the Nature Trail around the marsh during the outgoing tide. Some of the fauna and flora of this area are described and illustrated in Diane Conradson's *Exploring Our Baylands* (available for $2 plus tax at the National Audubon Society Center 2426 Bancroft Way, Berkeley). Leaders, Mrs. Vi Homem, 655-8886, and Mrs. Val DaCosta, 931-5257.

Tuesday, February 7, the above trip will be repeated, but meet at **10 a.m.**

Sunday, February 19, to Lake Merced, San Francisco, for land and water birds. Meet at **9 a.m.** in the big parking lot north of the lake, just off Sunset Blvd. Leader, Glen Ellwood, 334-8512.

On all field trips bring lunch, binoculars, and interested friends.

— MRS. VALERIA G. DaCOSTA, *Field Trips Chairman*

"FOR GENERATIONS TO COME" — FEBRUARY 14 FILM

Howard L. Orians of Madison, Wisconsin, will show his wildlife film, *For Generations to Come*, **Tuesday, February 14, at 8:15 p.m.** in the Berkeley Little Theatre, Allston Way at Grove Street. This film portrays the heavily forested State of Wisconsin as it appeared before white man discovered this fertile region more than three hundred years ago. The swift changes,

good and bad, wrought by man are quickly presented in a kaleidoscopic review. The photographer also shows what is now being done by individuals, private organizations, and various governmental units to preserve our natural heritage. By vocation, a minister of a church in the city of Madison, Reverend Orians is an outstanding photographer and naturalist. He is active in the Milwaukee Audubon Society, and has been president and director of the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology.

This film is the fourth in the current Golden Gate Audubon film series. Single admission at the door is $1.50 for adults and $1.00 for students under 18 who do not have season tickets.

IN MEMORIAM — FRANK A. SCOTT

We regret to report that Frank A. Scott, a long-time active member of the Golden Gate Audubon Society, passed away on December 7. He was 86. Mr. Scott graduated from Harvard University in 1903. For several years he was Education Chairman of Golden Gate Audubon and he was the first Sanctuary and Memorial Fund Chairman. His widow, Dorothy Dean Scott, has also been active in Golden Gate Audubon Society for many years.

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH RECEIVES GOVERNOR'S AWARD

Architect Jack Hermann represented Audubon Canyon Ranch in Pasadena late in December when the Ranch received an award in the Governor's Design Awards Program honoring environmental excellence. Out of 68 awards given in 12 categories, the Ranch received one of the 9 "awards of exceptional distinction". The award was given in the conservation category; our project was judged as it "contributed to conservation or the enhancement of natural beauty" and as it furthered the "protection or meaningful use of open space". Certificates signed by Governor Brown were issued to the Ranch and to Golden Gate and Marin Audubon Societies.

A $40,000 GIFT TO AUDUBON CANYON RANCH

Dr. L. M. Griffin, Chairman of Audubon Canyon Ranch, has announced that the M. H. Lewis Foundation of Los Angeles has made a gift of $40,000 to the Golden Gate Audubon Society to be used to make the final payments upon the Ranch's 569 acres.

NATURE TRAINING PROGRAM BEGINS SPRING SESSIONS

The Audubon Nature Training Program at Aquatic Park, Berkeley, will open the spring schedule with classes in February. A youth group leaders' session will start **Tuesday, February 7.** The first of three series of sessions for elementary teachers will begin **February 9.** The parents' sessions start **April 12,** and one series for summer camp counselors will begin **May 10.** This training program is under the direction of Miss Phyllis Lindley and is sponsored by the Golden Gate Audubon Society in cooperation with the Berkeley Recreation and Parks Department. Two extensions of the training program were launched last fall: — a special workshop for youth group leaders and a seminar for elementary teachers who had taken the basic training program. Total attendance for 1966 was 52 adults in 296 class days.

For further information and enrollment, please write or phone Audubon Nature Training Program, 2426 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, Cal. 94704 (848-4043) or Miss Lindley (549-1038).

COVEL'S CONSERVATION CORNER

The *Resources and Recreation Section* of the 39th Annual Statewide Meeting of the California State Chamber of Commerce, held on December 8 at the Hilton Hotel, San Francisco, was attended and reported for Golden Gate Audubon by Mrs. Dale Clyde. We have gleaned from Mrs. Clyde's notes and studied the programmed subjects and speakers. It appears there were qualified speakers for both sides, — commerce and free development versus more government control of natural resources. Not included on the printed program for the Redwood Park discussion were leading conservation groups like Audubon and Sierra Club, while Western lumbermen and their leading Congressional sponsor of the Del Norte (smaller) National Redwood Park presented their side of the issue.

"Open Space Conservation — An Unresolved Issue" was more fairly discussed by several able speakers, who dwelt on the pros and cons of State Proposition 3, which many of us hope will save some agricultural and other open space land. Mrs. Clyde was unable to attend the afternoon panel on "Trash, Treatment and Taxes," but we feel assured that such spokesmen as the State Chairman of the California Federation of Womens' Clubs made a strong case for civic beauty and space-conservation at any cost. That reminds us to ask you: Have you asked *your* city fathers and master planners what they plan to do with trash when bay fill must end? There are very efficient — and very expensive — new smog-free incinerators available.

And once again — the *Regional Exchange*, monthly information bulletin of Citizens for Regional Recreation and Parks, has published a fact-packed sheet (enclosed) on the values of San Francisco Bay tidelands and marshes. There are convincing reasons in this to quote to uninformed folks.

A significant test suit against the use of DDT insecticides on private farms and lands against owners' wishes has been heard by the New York Supreme Court, and the National Audubon Society is printing the records.

Our Best Wishes to Charles Callison, new National Audubon Society Chief Administrative Officer! Mr. Callison has a long, distinguished record in wildlife conservation. — PAUL F. COVEL, *Conservation Chairman.*

THE REFUGES FIELD TRIP REPORT

On the weekend of November 26-27 some 36 members and guests met at the Gray Lodge State Waterfowl Refuge near Gridley and enjoyed a near-perfect day of birding. Due to the season and hunting pressure the numbers of waterfowl were at a maximum, according to John Cowan, the Manager. Several hundred Sandhill Cranes, and many thousands of geese were seen, many Ross Geese being observed among the Snow Geese. Four Wood Ducks were also seen there, as well as about 15 Whistling Swans.

Sunday morning dawned fair but as the day progressed it became in-

creasingly obvious that rain was not far off. The Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge had large numbers of birds also: the "dark geese" – smaller races of the Canada Goose, and White-fronted Geese, being more common there, and Ross Geese less common. A flock of over 100 Long-billed Curlews was seen in a field nearby. After the group had broken up in the afternoon some of the party spotted a European Widgeon at "Widgeon Bend," where we have observed them in past seasons. The total count for the Refuges was 71 species.

Both Rough-legged and Ferruginous Hawks were observed at close range and in excellent light between Winters and Arbuckle. – HARRY C. ADAMSON, *Leader and Historian.*

OBSERVATIONS

Dec. 13 – The Golden Gate Audubon field trip produced close views of two clapper rails at high tide at Richardson Bay.

Dec. 18 – In the pools near the Dumbarton Bridge toll booth Jeffrey Greenhouse and John Westlake saw over 50 black-necked stilts and 5 whistling swans. In a nearby field a whimbrel fed with a flock of curlew. A trip along Mines Rd., Livermore, that afternoon yielded a vesper sparrow and a phainopepla.

Dec. 18 – About 8 a.m. Bertha Underhill heard and saw a flight of about 30 whistling swans flying over her house in the Berkeley hills.

Dec. 21 – Gerard Brady found a common teal (Anas crecca) on Tomales Bay near his Inverness Motel.

Dec. 21 – A female oldsquaw appeared near Limantour Spit for the Point Reyes Bird Observatory Christmas Count.

Dec. 26 – Harry and Betty Adamson had a slate-colored junco, orange-crowned warbler and Lincoln's sparrow in their Lafayette backyard for the Mt. Diablo Audubon Christmas Count, and a female Bullock's oriole visited their feeder December 27 and returned for several days.

Dec. 31 – The Tomales Bay Count produced a least bittern (Ixobrychus exilis). – Found by Val DaCosta and Jacqueline Shonewald.

December (latter part) – Paul Opler found an oldsquaw and Lynn Farrar spotted an adult glaucous gull at McClure's Beach, Pt. Reyes Seashore.

Jan. 2 – Patricia Boese found a spotted sandpiper at Lake Temescal, Oakland hill area, during the Oakland Christmas Count.

The January *Redwood Log* of Marin Audubon reported that an emperor goose had been sighted at Limantour Spit in early December, and that Florence McMillan of Sausalito saw two male black-throated blue warblers in her yard November 24 and 25.

WANTED: DETAILED OBSERVATIONS OF WHITE-TAILED KITES

Dr. Peter L. Ames, Assistant Curator of Birds of the U.C. Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, has sent Golden Gate Audubon Society a copy of his Interim Report No. 1, *The Ecology of the White-tailed Kite in Central California: A Long-Term Study.* We quote the following paragraphs:

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126 Post Street, Room 607
San Francisco, Calif. 94108

REGIONAL EXCHANGE

An information service by
CITIZENS FOR REGIONAL
RECREATION AND PARKS
126 Post Street, Room 607
San Francisco, Calif. 94108

December 1966

WHY MARSHES AND MUD FLATS ARE VITAL TO THE BAY AREA

FOUR GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES are engaged in regional planning programs dealing with the use of land in the Bay Area, the need for adequate transportation, and the protection of the shores and open waters of the Bay.

THESE AGENCIES are the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), the Bay Area Transportation Study Commission (BATSC), the Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Program (BDWQP), and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). The work of these Agencies is being summarized in the Regional Exchange.

from a more extensive technical report by H. Thomas Harvey, Professor of Biology at San Jose State College. This is one of a series of informational reports designed to help the BCDC reach decisions as to the future uses of the Bay. These decisions will form the foundation for the BCDC's plan.

ALTHOUGH THEY MAY NOT APPEAR ATTRACTIVE, mud flats are an important link in the Bay's life cycle. They draw foods from nearby marshes and from the incoming tides and turn this food into forms upon which many wild birds, fish, and small animals depend.

MUD FLATS LIE between the highest tide water mark and the lowest water mark. They generally occur where the shore slopes gently into the Bay waters. There are now about 45,000 acres of mud flats which vary in their composition from fine water-logged sediments to sand and gravel. There are also a few places such as Coyote Point, Point San Pablo, and Carquinez Straits that are predominately rocky areas.

MICROSCOPIC PLANTS (algae) and animals (plankton) occupy the mud surface or float in the water above it; their food value is not known exactly, but it is estimated to be very high. The other major foods are decomposing plants and organisms together with the bacteria and fungus working upon them (called detritus). Much of this food material comes from decomposing salt marsh grasses . . .

CLAMS, MUSSELS, WORMS AND OTHER MUD-DWELLERS feed upon these foods and themselves become food for fish or birds or they produce larvae upon which the fish and birds may feed.

of the value of Proposition One has already been wasted by skyrocketing land costs, -- that is close to $40 million of a public trust has been dissipated and lost through two years of blocking and delay by the Legislature.

Is there no way to speed this process? No method for the State Division of Beaches and Parks to hold land destined for a park till the funds are appropriated?

* *

WE NEED FACTS ABOUT THE BAY before we can expect ACTION. Here is your chance! You can make regional communication a chain reaction -- a veritable explosion of information. Copies of this monthly fact sheet can be supplied at the rate of 50 for 1 dollar, 500 for $10 a month. Single subscriptions for $2 dollars a year.

SEVERAL ORGANIZATIONS ARE NOW COOPERATING to send out this news Exchange. If you get more than one copy you can either let this office know, or, better, slip it into an envelope and send it to a public official with a notation on it from you, like "Thought you would be interested."

For ordering copies or sending other information, please use the address below:

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"In January, 1966, the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Game, began a long-term study of the Kite. The aim of the study is to investigate all aspects of Kite ecology, in the hope of evaluating the factors behind the species' recovery, the rate of increase, and future changes in Kite numbers and distribution.

"There are only a few of us directly involved in the Kite Study, but we are soliciting and receiving assistance from many quarters. In this report the 'editorial we' refers to myself (Ames) and to my assistant, James F. Lynch, as we comprise the Museum personnel involved in the study . . .

"Several persons have offered us the use of their extensive field notes of Kite sightings over the past several years. Such notes are gratefully accepted and provide us with information on Kite activity in areas not so intensively covered by our early field work. None of these observations will be used in published reports without the express permission of the donors. To those who ask what sort of field observations are of the most use to this study, our reply is a bit complex. We offer suggestions based on what we ourselves attempt to record in the field:

A. Of primary importance:

1. Date and time of day.

2. Exact locale . . . The location of a bird to a particular grove of trees or line of posts is often important in locating a nest or making a later check for breeding activity.

3. Age and number of individuals. We check all kites, when possible, for signs of juvenal plumage: the presence of the brown breastband (and width of the band) or other areas of brown; white tips on the wing and back feathers; gray subterminal bar on the tail (except the central pair of feathers) . . .

4. Activity. Was a bird hovering, perched, displaying, etc.? This data tells us a lot about the likelihood of finding a roost, nest, or whatever. In the fall and winter we watch particularly for the steady, deliberate but rapid flight of a bird going to a roost about sundown or shortly later. From January to July we are alert to the display performed near the nest. The bird flies slowly on wings held stiffly outward a bit above the horizontal, maintaining itself with a quivering motion of the primaries. Usually the feet are lowered.

5. Bands. To an increasing extent, we will examine birds for bands and plumage stains. A spotting scope is usually needed to read color bands, but plumage dyes on the tail are usually visible through binoculars.

B. Of secondary importance, but useful when obtainable:

6. Substrate or habitat. We feel that this will prove useful in evaluating our measured Kite density figures, as well as in determining the choice of hunting terrain. We record substrate particularly in hovering birds and only in general terms: "salicornia marsh", "short-cropped green pasture", "plowed field", etc.

7. Hunting success. When we have time to watch a bird which we believe will remain visible for at least ten minutes, we record the number

of changes in position; incomplete strikes (in which the bird dropped, but did not reach the ground); strikes (struck the ground); success or failure; and time spent feeding. Points 1-5 must be recorded if this section is to be meaningful.

8. Relationship to other raptors and to crows. Any degree of antagonism or cooperation is of interest. By cooperation, I mean such observations as crows and kites both chasing a Red-Tail. Even unusual toleration of one by the other is of interest. We have seen two Kites, four Crows, and two pheasants perched in a single ten-foot tree at the same time.

"We are soliciting any and all information dealing with Kites, past or present. Locations of nests and roosts will greatly aid us. We assume that such information is given in confidence and not for further dissemination, but we also assume that the contributor intends that the Kites be banded. Further activities will not be undertaken at a nest or a roost without first discussing our plans with the person who provided the original information. Of course, all activities must be cleared with the landowner as well.

"A surprisingly small number of people are aware of the significance of the fully protected status of the White-tailed Kite. While most of our raptors and all of our other non-game species are protected from shooting and other forms of molestation, the four fully-protected species may not be taken for any reason, even legitimate scientific research by holders of scientific collecting permits or banding permits. Although this restriction prevents sampling of eggs or birds for certain worthwhile projects, such as pesticide analyses, it has probably been a major factor in the recent recovery of the Kite from the critical low point of thirty-five years ago.

Interested persons who wish to receive further information about this long-term study in the form of future reports and published accounts, or who wish to enlighten us with their own Kite observations, are invited to contact: Dr. Peter L. Ames, Assistant Curator of Birds, Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, Calif. 94720."

WILDERNESS CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN APRIL

"Wilderness and the Quality of American Life" is the theme of the Sierra Club's Tenth Biennial Wilderness Conference to be held on **April 7, 8, and 9** at the Hilton Hotel in San Francisco. On Sunday, April 9, there will be a field trip by chartered bus to the Big Basin Redwoods State Park in Santa Cruz County. The registration fee will be $5 (students, $2.50). Other costs are: Friday banquet, $6.50; Saturday luncheon, $4.75; Sunday field trip (including lunch), $5. Tables of ten can be reserved at the banquet. A reservation form and conference details will be in the next *Gull.* For further information, write to Mrs. Maxine McCloskey, Executive Assistant, 1967 Wilderness Conference, 93 Florada Ave., Piedmont, Calif. 94610.

KQED PROGRAM ON SAN FRANCISCO BAY

On alternate Thursday evenings at 7:30 KQED televises a program series entitled "The Bay Today and Tomorrow." The programs are based on Bay Conservation and Development Commission reports. Films and panel discussions are included in this educational series.

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH, BOLINAS LAGOON

Under joint sponsorship of Golden Gate and Marin Audubon Societies to protect a major rookery of Common Egrets and Great Blue Herons.

We received the following letter from the Ross Valley 4-H Club:

"Thanks to each of you for your help with Blue Chip Stamps! We gave the Audubon Society another $800 for a second acre of land the first of October. We have received word that by early 1967 the Audubon Society will own, debt free, 567 acres of land. Isn't that great? We have sent in 107½ books this past month (December). This is $215, and you have sent in more books and stamps which we'll send off as soon as our box is full. We *thought* we were going for a third acre, but instead we can go for helping to construct, maintain, and staff the planned "Nature-Education Center." This is *really* great, for it means we help not only ourselves but those who follow us.

"Without each of you, success would have been minimal in degree and slow in achievement. With you success became a stepping-stone to another dream. Thank you." Richard Miller, Sr. Leader.

(Appropriately, President Johnson has signed a proclamation designating 1967 as Youth for Natural Beauty and Conservation Year.)

MEMORIAL GIFTS were made to Canyon Ranch as follows:

In Memory of:	*Gift of:*
Mrs. George (Hope) Purmont	Grace Shuman, Mrs. Crawford Thomas, Leila and Homer Wheeler, Mr. and Mrs. James F. Wurm, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Cornell Kip Finch, Alexis J. Batmale, Erla and Carl Trexel, Alberta M. Pruett, William L. Shattuck, Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth D. Gardner, Mrs. Lowell A. Rantz.
Frank A. Scott	Myra J. Browne, Mary Albro, Miss Eugenie Schutt, Mrs. Julia L. Schutt, Georgia Wintringham, Dr. and Mrs. Albert Boles, Evelyn Steel Little, Constance M. Steel, Lucile Czarnowski, Margaret Murdock, Josephine E. Smith, Sarah R. Davis, Eleanor E. Bartlett, Wilma Waite, May Dornin, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Dunlap.
Lorrain B. Mackay	Mr. and Mrs. Alexis Becker
John Graciano	Dr. and Mrs. Albert Boles
Charles G. Thompson	Mr. and Mrs. Charles Balmer, Blanche Vranna
Harry B. Allen	Mr. and Mrs. Howard Allen, Mr. and Mrs. T. E. Walsh
Myra Palache	Mrs. Stanley Ward
Ebba Faye	Isabel B. Faye

Christmas gifts were made to Audubon Canyon Ranch *in honor of* Olga Alpen, Florence Alpen, Aileen Bonestell, and Dr. and Mrs. Frank Essene — by Phyllis A. Zweigart. A Christmas gift was sent to Canyon Ranch *in honor of* Dr. Albert Boles by Boy Scout Troop 254.

A gift of remembrance was made to National Audubon Society's Richardson Bay Sanctuary *in memory of* Mike Silva by Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. DaCosta.

— DR. ALBERT BOLES, *Sanctuary & Memorial Fund Chairman*
854 Longridge Rd., Oakland, Calif. 94610

Non-memorial donations may be sent to Audubon Canyon Ranch, Box 2113, San Francisco 94126.

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Claims for missing numbers of THE GULL should be sent to the Editor. Changes of address should be sent to the Membership Secretary.

Monthly meetings second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint Membership, Local and National $8.50 per year, Includes AUDUBON MAGAZINE and THE GULL. Subscription to THE GULL separately $2.00 per year.

Visit the Conservation Center of the NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
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